WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

| 1 | 1. A method of presenting information on a space-constrained display of a |
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| 2 | portable device, the method comprising: |
| 3 | associating a first indication on the display with a user-defined external state; |
| 4 | establishing a user-defined operation for monitoring the user-defined external |
| 5 | state; and |
| 6 | updating the first indication on the display in accordance with the monitored |
| 7 | user-defined external state in response to an information encoding |
| 8 | thereof received via a telecommunications network. |
| 1 | 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the user-defined external state is one of: |
| 2 | a weather or environmental state; |
| 3 | a system or information status state; and |
| 4 | a news or sports information state. |
| 1 | 3. The method of claim 1, further comprising: |
| 2 | performing the established user-defined operation using a networked |
| 3 | computational service remote from the portable device; and |
| 4 | supplying the information encoding in correspondence with a result of the |
| 5 | performed user-defined operation. |
| 1 | 4. The method of claim 3, |
| 2 | wherein the supplying includes pushing the information encoding to the |
| 3 | portable device via the telecommunications network. |
| 1 | 5. The method of claim 3, |
| 2 | wherein the supplying includes supplying the information encoding to the |
| 3 | portable device via the telecommunications network in response to a |
| 4 | request therefor from the portable device. |
| 1 | 6. The method of claim 1, further comprising: |

| 2 | retrieving from a networked computational service remote from the portable |
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| 3 | device, an information encoding in correspondence with a result of the |
| 4 | performed user-defined operation. |
| 1 | 7. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the user-defined external state is selected from amongst a |
| 3 | predetermined set of external states available for monitoring. |
| 1 | 8. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the establishing of the user-defined operation includes selecting from |
| 3 | amongst a predetermined set of at least partially-predefined queries. |
| 1 | 9. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the associating of the first indication with the user-defined external |
| 3 | state is performed without use of the portable device. |
| 1 | 10. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the establishing of the user-defined operation is performed without |
| 3 | use of the portable device. |
| 1 | 11. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein either or both of the associating of the first indication with the user- |
| 3 | defined external state and the establishing of the user-defined operation |
| 4 | are performed via the portable device. |
| 1 | 12. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the user-defined operation includes a query executable at a networked |
| 3 | computational service remote from the portable device. |
| 1 | 13. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein in the first indication is a graphical indication. |
| 1 | 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising: |

| 2 | associating a second indication with the user-defined external state, the second |
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| 3 | indication providing textual description rendered in response to |
| 4 | selection, at the portable device, of the first indication. |
| 1 | 15. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the display device includes a two-dimensional array of display |
| 3 | elements suitable for simultaneously presenting plural visual |
| 4 | indications displaced throughout at least a portion thereof, the first |
| 5 | indication corresponding to at least one of the plural visual indications. |
| 1 | 16. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the plural visual indications exhibit at least two indication states each. |
| 1 | 17. The method of claim 1, |
| 2 | wherein the display device includes a two-dimensional array of display |
| 3 | elements suitable for simultaneously presenting plural visual |
| 4 | indications displaced throughout at least a portion thereof. |
| 1 | 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the portable device includes one or more |
| 2 | of: |
| 3 | a phone; |
| 4 | a personal digital assistant; |
| 5 | a pager; |
| 6 | a palm- or handheld-computer; |
| 7 | a digital media player; |
| 8 | a communications-enabled portable device; and |
| 9 | a WAP- or iMode-enabled portable device. |
| 1 | 19. The method of claim 1, wherein the telecommunications network |
| 2 | transmission and routing facilities include one or more of: |
| 3 | a wireless voice network; |
| 4 | a wireless data network; |
| 5 | a packet-switched data network; |
| 6 | an internet or intranet; |

| 7 | a local- or wide-area network; and |
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| 8 | a public switched telecommunications network (PSTN). |
| 1 | 20. A portable device comprising: |
| 2 | a space-constrained display including a two-dimensional array of display |
| 3 | elements suitable for simultaneously presenting plural visual |
| 4 | indications displaced throughout at least a portion thereof; and |
| 5 | a communications interface to a telecommunications network, the |
| 6 | communications interface coupled to the space-constrained display and |
| 7 | allowing the portable device to receive information encoding one or |
| 8 | more external states and to update respective ones of the visual |
| 9 | indications based on respective user-defined associations with the |
| 10 | external states. |
| 1 | 21. The portable device of claim 20, |
| 2 | wherein the external states are user selected and include one or more of |
| 3 | weather status, environmental status, system status, information status, |
| 4 | and news, sports or financial status. |
| | |
| 1 | 22. The portable device of claim 20, |
| 2 | wherein the plural visual indications are grouped based on correspondence of |
| 3 | the associated external states. |
| 1 | 23. The portable device of claim 20, |
| 2 | wherein the telecommunications network includes one or more of a wireless |
| 3 | voice network, a wireless data network, a packet-switched data |
| 4 | network, an internet or intranet, a local- or wide-area network and a |
| 5 | public switched telecommunications network (PSTN). |
| 1 | 24. The portable device of claim 20, |
| 2 | embodied as one or more of a phone, a personal digital assistant, a pager, a |
| 3 | palm- or handheld-computer, a digital media player, a |
| 4 | communications-enabled portable device and a WAP- or iMode- |
| 5 | enabled portable device. |

| 1 | 25. A computer program product encoded in at least one computer readable |
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| 2 | medium, the computer program product comprising: |
| 3 | a first functional sequence executable to establish an association between |
| 4 | plural indications on a display of a portable device and respective user- |
| 5 | defined external states; |
| 6 | a second functional sequence executable to supply via a telecommunications |
| 7 | network an information encoding for update of the indications on the |
| 8 | display in accordance with the user-defined external states. |
| 1 | 26. The computer program product of claim 25, |
| 2 | wherein execution of the first functional sequence further establishes user- |
| 3 | defined operations for monitoring the user-defined external states. |
| 1 | 27. The computer program product of claim 25, further comprising: |
| 2 | a third functional sequence executable to monitor of the user-defined external |
| 3 | states. |
| 1 | 28. The computer program product of claim 25, |
| 2 | wherein the first and second functional sequences are both executable on a |
| 3 | networked information server that accesses one or more data stores in |
| 4 | which results of monitoring of the user-defined external states are |
| 5 | encoded. |
| 1 | 29. The computer program product of claim 25, |
| 2 | wherein the first functional sequence is embodied at least in part as code |
| 3 | implementing a web page accessible from either or both of the portable |
| 4 | device and a networked computer. |
| 1 | 30. The computer program product of claim 25, |
| 2 | wherein the at least one computer readable medium is selected from the set of |
| 3 | a disk, tape or other magnetic, optical, or electronic storage medium |
| 4 | and a network, wireline, wireless or other communications medium. |

| 1 | 31. An apparatus comprising: |
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| 2 | means for presenting a visual indication on a display device; |
| 3 | means for associating, based on a user selection, the visual indication with a |
| 4 | state external to the apparatus; and |
| 5 | means for receiving an information encoding corresponding to the external |
| 6 | state and for updating the visual indication based thereon. |
| | |
| 1 | 32. The apparatus of claim 31, further comprising: |
| 2 | means for ascertaining the external state and for communicating the |
| 3 | information encoding corresponding thereto. |
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